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**Advisory For:**  
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## **Bank of America and Washington State Mentors collaborate in support of state's youth**

RICHLAND, Wash. -- Fourteen organizations across Washington will receive grants totaling \$75,000 from the Bank of America Mentoring Initiative and Washington State Mentors (WSM).

The grants, funded by the Bank of America Charitable Foundation and administered by WSM, are an effort to support quality mentoring organizations that are serving youth living in poverty, said Lieutenant Governor Brad Owen, who is co-chair of the Issaquah-based non-profit organization.

Catholic Family Services' Foster Care to College Program will receive a \$5,000 grant. At noon on Thursday, September 11<sup>th</sup> Lt. Governor Brad Owen and Kurt Walsdorf, Bank of America Market President for Eastern and Central Washington will host a celebration in honor of Catholic Family Services' Foster Care to College Program at Richland Catholic Family & Child Services located at 2139 Van Giesen. Community members are encouraged to attend.

"Mentoring is a potent agent for positive change in society," Owen said. "Research has shown that a structured and trusting relationship between a young person and a caring adult is related to reductions in youth pregnancy, violence and substance abuse. At the same time, mentoring is associated with improved academic performance."

"As one of the largest corporate contributors in the United States, Bank of America is excited to direct funding to help mentor children across Washington State," said Peter Joers, Bank of America's Washington State President. "Strengthening the minds and spirit of our youth is truly one of the most important investments we can make now for the future of our communities. We are proud to partner with Washington State Mentors for the third year to help make this happen."

Jim Marsh, President and Chief Operating Officer of WSM added: "As the leading advocate for mentoring in the state, we are very proud of the work these grant winners are doing with Washington State's youth and of the community spirit Bank of America has shown by this commitment."

Washington State Mentors is an umbrella organization for the state's mentoring community, providing assistance with training, recruitment, resource development, data collection, public awareness and public policy. WSM is supported by Costco Wholesale, the state Department of Social and Health Services and several other individuals and organizations.

**Grant Recipients Include:**

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Island County  
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwest Washington  
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Thurston County  
Highline Big Picture High School  
Boys & Girls Clubs of the Lewis-Clark Valley - Giant Killers  
Catholic Family Service  
Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration - Region 1  
Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration - Region 2  
Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration - Region 4  
Olympic Educational Service District 114 - Kitsap Alternative Transition School  
Left Foot Organics  
Pierce County Alliance  
Yakima Family YMCA - ASPIRE  
Youthnet

The community grants will be dispersed this month. For more information go to [www.wamentors.org](http://www.wamentors.org) or contact Peggy Gray at (206) 276-4436 or [pgray@wamentors.org](mailto:pgray@wamentors.org).